

MACAULAY'S USE OF LITERATURE

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the best men in the French household troops,
but who is
much dejected by learning that he may find it
difficult to
have his Champagne iced daily during the
summer. He
carries with him cooks, confectioners, and
laundresses, a
waggonload of plate, a wardrobe of laced and
embroidered
suits, and much rich tent furniture, of which
the patterns
have been chosen by a committee of fine
ladies.¹

Even financial and economic questions
Macaulay en-
livens by using plays to illustrate them. He
elucidates the
rivalry between the old and the new East
India Companies
by a quotation from Rowe's comedy, *The
Biter*,² and the
mania for speculation by a scene in
Shadwell's *Stock-*
jobbers.

It was in the last drama of Shadwell that
the hypocrisy
and knavery of these speculators was, for the
first time,
exposed to public ridicule. He died in
November, 1692,
just before his *Stockjobbers* came on the
stage; and the
epilogue was spoken by an actor dressed in
deep mourning.
The best scene is that in which four or five
stern Noncon-
formists, clad in full Puritan costume, after
discussing the
prospects of the *Mousetrap* Company and the
Fleakilling
Company, examine the question whether the
godly may
lawfully hold stock in a Company for bringing
over Chinese
ropedancers. ¹ Considerable men have shares/
says one
austere person in cropped hair and bands; '
but verily I

question whether it be lawful or not/ These
 doubts are
 removed by a stout old Roundhead colonel
 who had
 fought at Marston Moor, and who reminds
 his weaker
 brother that the saints need not themselves
 see the rope-
 dancing, and that, in all probability, there will
 be no
 ropedancing to see. ' The thing/ he says, * is
 like to take.
 The shares will sell well ; and then we shall
 not care
 whether the dancers come over or no/ ³

¹ IV, 2029-30 (xvii).

^a V, 2108, n. i (xviii).

³ V, 2280 (xix).